

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 31, 2006

PRESENT: Shawn Costello, James Gage, David Hurley, Jesse Amsel, Walter Moody and Glenn Eberly

ABSENT: None

STAFF

PRESENT: Rob Phillips, Town Planner and Reanna Goodreau, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Costello called the Ellington Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Open Space Plan

Commissioner Gage noted his concern that there are no focus areas noted on any map in the plan. He presented his idea for the focus areas. The commission had a lengthy discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of having focus areas and decided that general areas should be noted on a map. The commission decided that all members should come to the February meeting with their idea of how the map should be drawn and they would decide which map is best to insert into the plan. The commission also requested that staff coordinate with the consultant to have them reorganize the goals and objectives in accordance with the changes presented by Commissioners Hurley and Gage.

MOVED (GAGE), SECONDED (AMSEL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO HAVE THE OPEN SPACE PLAN (TO BE KNOWN AS THE PLAN OF CONSERVATION) DRAFT BE REVISED TO INCLUDE A MAP SHOWING AREAS OF TOWN HIGHLIGHTED FOR PROTECTION, WHICH ARE TO BE KNOWN AS "CONSERVATION FOCUS AREAS."

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION CONTINUED THIS ITEM TO THE FEBRUARY 28, 2006 MEETING.

2. Evaluation of Town-Owned Properties

Reanna Goodreau stated the Matt Bordeaux, planning intern, completed a color-coded map representing different types of town-owned properties. Commissioner Hurley stated that the purpose of creating this map was to aid the commission in their evaluation of town-owned properties.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION CONTINUED THIS ITEM TO THE FEBRUARY 28, 2006 MEETING.

3. Development of Parcel Selection for Upcoming DEP Grant

MOVED (COSTELLO), SECONDED (AMSEL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:25 PM FOR THE PURPOSES OF DISCUSSING PROPERTY ACQUISITION.

MOVED (MOODY), SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:45 PM.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION CONTINUED THIS ITEM TO THE FEBRUARY 28, 2006 MEETING.

4. Disposition of Funds when the Town Sells Land

Chairman Costello stated that the funds from the sale of town-owned properties are deposited into a Municipal Land Trust Fund, as communicated by Board of Selectmen Liaison Charter at last month's Conservation Commission meeting. The commission was concerned that if a piece of land that was given as open space or was purchased with open space funds, the money should be earmarked to go to the purchase of additional open space lands if it was sold. Chairman Costello suggested that a letter be sent to the Town Attorney and the Board of Selectmen (BOS) requesting that the ordinance be changed to allow the BOS to approve allocating funding under certain circumstances.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION CONTINUED THIS ITEM TO THE FEBRUARY 28, 2006 MEETING.

5. Development of Deed Restrictions and Policies for Town-Owned Open Space and Properties

The commission discussed the importance of placing restrictions on certain parcels of land when the town receives them for open space purposes. The commission requested that staff discuss the possibility of this with the Town Attorney.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION CONTINUED THIS ITEM TO THE FEBRUARY 28, 2006 MEETING.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Review of the Commission's 2005 Recommendations & Decisions and their Outcomes

Chairman Costello stated that he reviewed several months' worth of meeting minutes from 2005 and noticed that many of the items were repeated at several meetings and there was no

resolution. He requested that the other members review the minutes and suggested that the commission discuss this further at the March meeting.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION CONTINUED THIS ITEM TO THE MARCH 28, 2006 MEETING.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

MOVED (COSTELLO), SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADD TO THE AGENDA: DISCUSSION REGARDING THE SUBMISSION OF A LETTER TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN REQUESTING A REFERENDUM FOR FUNDING OF OPEN SPACE.

Chairman Costello explained that Commissioner Gage drafted a letter to the Board of Selectmen requesting that there be a referendum for open space funding during the next election. Commissioner Gage noted that the Board of Finance expressed support for a referendum at their September meeting.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION AGREED TO HAVE STAFF FORWARD A LETTER TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN REQUESTING A REFERENDUM FOR FUNDING THE OPEN SPACE FUND.

1. Discussion of the Purchase of Development Rights for the Schneider Property off Porter Road, APN 123-007-0000

Commissioner Gage stated that Mr. Schneider is no longer interested in selling the development rights of this property to the town at this time.

COMMISSIONER GAGE REQUESTED THAT THIS ITEM BE TAKEN OFF THE AGENDA BECAUSE MR. SCHNEIDER DECIDED THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO OFFER THE TOWN THE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS OF THIS PROPERTY.

2. Yanaros Subdivision Open Space—Update

Reanna Goodreau explained that the Board of Selectmen reconsidered and accepted the Yanaros Subdivision open space proposal.

3. Election of Officers

MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (EBERLY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO NOMINATE SHAWN COSTELLO AS CHAIRMAN.

MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (EBERLY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO CLOSE THE NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIRMAN AND ELECT SHAWN COSTELLO AS CHAIRMAN.

MOVED (COSTELLO), SECONDED (AMSEL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO NOMINATE DAVID HURLEY AS VICE CHAIRMAN.

MOVED (COSTELLO), SECONDED (AMSEL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO CLOSE THE NOMINATIONS FOR VICE CHAIRMAN AND ELECT DAVID HURLEY AS VICE CHAIRMAN.

4. Approval of the December 27, 2005 Meeting Minutes

MOVED (HURLEY), SECONDED (AMSEL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING MINUTES.

MOVED (COSTELLO), SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADD TO THE AGENDA: DISCUSSION REGARDING FUNDING FOR THE TOWN PLANNER TO ATTEND GIS TRAINING.

Rob Phillips explained that he found an opportunity for training in order to refresh his skills on GIS software, but noted that the funding may need to come from the Conservation Commission's budget. The commission discussed how this training would help the commission's production of maps and agreed to release funds for the training.

MOVED (COSTELLO), SECONDED (MOODY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF FUNDS FROM THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAVEL BUDGET IN ORDER FOR THE TOWN PLANNER TO ATTEND A 3 DAY GIS CLASS IN FEBRUARY.

5. Correspondence:

- a. Environmental Management Bulletin, 12/30/05 (Recreational Trail Programs—Grants Available)
- b. Email regarding Community Education Efforts

Chairman Costello noted that the grant application is due March 1, 2006. The commission discussed different areas that would benefit from the grant. He stated that he would coordinate with the Public Works Director.

CHAIRMAN COSTELLO STATED THAT HE WOULD COORDINATE WITH THE PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR TO DETERMINE IF THERE WERE ANY PROJECTS THAT WOULD BE COVERED UNDER THIS GRANT THAT THE COMMISSION COULD APPLY FOR.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (EBERLY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Reanna Goodreau
Recording Secretary